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5/27/82

Dear Johann,

Glad to get your long letter of the 23rd today. I'll go through it again and provide what information and help I can. First and explanation: please excuse the haste and typos because my working days are now more limited. I lost yesterday because it was the day of my regular return to the Washington hospital for the regular check. I lose every morning from work because I have to go to a local mall, where I can walk and then, when I must, sit until I can walk again. When I returned today I had to drive my wife around on errands.

There is no local means of duplicating any motion picture film. I am reluctant to send it out of town but when no other possibility exists, maybe we can run that risk. The cost is about 30¢ a foot for duplicating, and I'm assuming that old-time regular 8 mm can be duplicated.

There also are many FBI reports pertaining to such films as Martin's and Doyle's. In fac , I've a rat her large file pertaining to Oswald's literature distribution. So, perhaps you'd want to come here some time, make notes or copies of what interests you, and examine the movies on my old but last I used to very good Bolex projector or with the editor?

I'll help you in any way I can, regardless of whether or not I agree with what you believe or are doing.

Last time I wrote Jesse Core he didn't answer. I don't know if he is still alive or whether something or somebody turned him off. He was very kind and as helpful as he could be and I liked him. But from Mark Lane to the FBI, there has been much badmouthing. I suppose it is possible that some of the nasty stuff usually distorted or openly fabricated and untrue reached him. He can give you a description of one of the men with Oswald, other than Steele, and how he was involved. He may remember when he saw himself in footage that no longer exists at WDSU. The WDSU footage I have is identical with what Bill Turner got from you.

I gave Planer my word I'd not show what he let me get duplicated at Panamerican to Garrison, but when you let Turner have it, he sent it to Garrison and Garrison made a big thing of having me come in for the showing. That is how I know. He also had young Steele, then a Marine lt. home on leave, in for that showing.

And this is the origin of the untrue report that it shows Shaw. I was there when Garrison claimed he could pick Shaw out , walking alongside the Camp St. side and then, allegedly, disappearing through a door I later learned could not be opened from the street side.

There is confirmation for your belief that you enlarged only 6 or 7 different frames, making a total of 17 prints. I have seen the 17 figure used in reports, maybe Secret Service reports, and I know very well that I have seen repeated reference to FBI agents showing six different pictures to people they interviewed. Only the FBI has not produced six different prints from the film and that is at issue in an FOIA case in court for four years. They've just recently claimed total compliance in that case and I've disputed them. When I go through your letter again I may add more. There is no doubt that the FBI could and did make prints. They tried to stay away from all they could, in the simply and practical belief that each picture presented a new problem as they tried to avoid all they could avoid. Oswald's associates is one of the areas of persistent avoidance. For example, in addition to pictures, they found a fingerprint not Oswald's on literature he alone, supposedly, distributed, when he picketed the carrier Wasp at the Dumaine St. wharf. I've never been able to get the identification.

In my own interviews I learned of others with Oswald at the IMM and elsewhere. At the IMM a Cuban who, I think, was the New Orleans leader of Alpha-66, was one source. He then was chief mechanic for the Fiat place on Baronne. He later moved to Miami. He told me that he happened to be driving past and he saw Oswald in that operation. He said that not only did Oswald have other associates, they also had an old car that was at, perhaps in part of the driveway of, a parking lot across the street.

I have notes on all of this but can't get at them conveniently. The guy who owned the Fiat agency was J.B. Vela, who also was an artist.

Garrison also got several reports of a man taking still pics of Oswald. Those reports describe his appearance roughly as under Hoover FBI agents dressed. I do not recall any that did not place him on Canal St. and do not recall whether it was at the time of the arrest. I think at least some placed Oswald near Waterbury's and not at the moment of his arrest.

Oswald made many more demonstrations that the FBI allowed itself to report and some of my sources who were not at all reluctant also were its sources.

At some point in the future I'll return to that writing but I have no reluctance in letting you know this so that perhaps you may be able to do with it what I now can't.

Oswald is not the one who picked the leaflets up at the Jones Printing Co. I interviewed Douglas Jones about that twice, separated by more than a year, and he was 100% consistent. He lost his life during Hurricane Camille, as I recall it. However, Oswald did have those leaflets, so there is an associate not accounted for by the FBI. In Oswald in New Orleans I have the FBI reports to the Warren Commission, giving the fumed-over what the FBI initially reported this and the deliberate and untruthful corruption of the feild reports by FBIHQ in what it gave the Commission.

All the people the FBI interviewed re the Doyle film said that there was one particular and conspicuous Oswald associate. My recollection is that Oswald was handing out the leaflets and this other man was marching with a sign.

Two of the men who can be identified in your still the Commission used are a Japanese named Ehara and John Alice, who had an export or import business. Others who were there then are the guy with blueprints under this arms, from the rental company in Memphis, Blockfield (maybe his name is Lawrence) and his friend who was then an assistant manager at the Roosevelt. I have the names. Just don't remember.

Barbara Reid thought she recognized a young man in the Martin film. I've forgotten the name she gave me but again have it in notes somewhere.

One of the provocative entries in Oswald's addressbook is Vern Rottman, with unlisted number(s). How did he know about Rottman and how did he get unlisted number(s)? I'm not aware of any checking of this, even by Garrison.

Mrs. Cerniglia, then with Cuban Catholic Relief, is aware of the many times Cubans complained to her about Oswald's (otherwise unreported) picketing and leafletting. Her husband was a dictor. Think her name was Alice.

Where the FBI made a big thing out of Oswald's leaflets being found on Pine St. and tried to connect it with Professor Reissmann (who refused to talk to me), they forgot to mention that those leaflets were found near Kent Courtney's. Reissman was a block away.

Think Roosevelt Hotel man named Nick Palmisano.

Of course you know Delores Neeley. Jesse said you lunched with her that day. She had left N.O. by the time I could do any checking.

If more comes to mind, I'll interrupt following your letter.

On the FBI's claim that they can't make copies of the WHSU film, or your own work, for you, they know better because they forced me to litigate that question and I beat them in a precedent decision by the D.C. court of appeals. There they made this claim for some pix to which Time, Inc., claimed the rights. The court upheld the lower court and ordered them to provide the pix, which they then did. I suggest that if you remind them that their providing copies of pictures for scholarly use does not end any copyright rights and cite my decision, while reminding them that you are the photog and have your own copy they may back down. If you have not appealed, I suggest that you do this in an appeal. Of course, in this I mean to make the request of the FBI rather than Archives. I read too fast and didn't realize that you'd made the request of the Archives. Send the request to both FBIHQ in D.C. zip 20535, and to the N.O. field office. Also Dallas F.O., and for all the pix you want. Tell them that these films are recorded as in their possession and in some instances in the "bulkies" in records provided to me. Ask them also to check the FBI's reading room.

You might even tell them that the N.O. film was duplicated for the FBI at Panamerican. They did make copies of the Doule and Martin films but I'm not certain this was done at Panamerican.

I have no need for a videotape of the WDSU film and as indicated above, you can have copies of what I have if we can figure out a safe way. I lost the first copy of the Doyle film (to Doyle) and because I was apprehensive, I had two copies of the Martin film made in Minneapolis and as I feared one never reached me.

I'd be interested in prints of other than Steel and Oswald so I can study them and have them, for file. The name White does not ring a bell.

There was a young man whose name I recall as Bruce, last name beginning with "A," who had some association with Oswald then. His father would not speak to me and after what the father told me, I did not look the kid up. He apparently flipped out and had be get institutional psychiatric care after the assassination. In 1969 he had just graduated from LSU and was working in Baton Rouge. The father feared that any questioning might cause a relapse. He and another son apparently associated the medical need with the assassination and Oswald.

I did not know that Ed Planer was not in the WDSU news dept in 1963 and perhaps I was confused or he was on when he looked at the film in the Aviella, but I'm certain that he and Jesse both confirmed that Jesse is not in it, as he isn't in what was duplicated for me. Maybe it was after Garrison started up. I never met Coporan and when I met Gifford he had moved to the ABC station, I think Channel 11. We never talked about that. He was clearly antagonistic in any event.

Glad to know that the splicing was at WDSU immediately after the assassination. I did not know this and had been led to believe otherwise.

The Archives may have two copies of this film, one from the Secret Service, which I examined, and perhaps that of the FBI, if it gave a copy to the Commission.

Your recollection is exactly what Jesse Core told me, in greater detail, about his being in your footage. Perhaps it is as you suggest later, that he was in the outtakes and they were not kept.

I've never seen "Executive Action."

The FBI had and used six of your blowups for exactly the purpose you recall, showing them to possible witnesses for identications. I've not gotten any yet and am trying to in this lawsuit I mentioned. All pix are within that litigation, that is, N.O. and Dallas, and they are holding out and lying. I may use the info you provide in this effort.

With regard to the books, I'll enclose a price list. It does not include "Oswald In New Orleans," which I did not publish myself and which is out of print.

Mary Ferrell tells me it is bringing fantastic prices. The only way I can provide a copy is by xerox. I have to get $21.00 for that, including postage and insurance, and it represents no profit because of the cost and inconvenience of commercial xeroxing here. I have a couple that I had made several years ago that I've not been letting people know I have. You can have one if you want it but I'd be just as happy if you can find a copy and do your own xeroxing.

Penn is well intended but he's been paranoid for years. I've not seen him since about 1968. He says I'm a CIA agent! Don't know if he still believes it.

Don't let it get to you this way and there is no reason why it should. Even if strange and unaccountable things do happen, as they have to me often enough.

I've a great interest in Oswald in New Orleans and most of my work there was in trying to trace his careers there, as a boy and after he returned. I did not work for Garrison, as the popular fiction has it, and often we were at logerheads. I had no real interest in Shaw and paid no attention to the prosecution until it was going to court. When I learned what the "case" was I disassociated myself from it, told Garrison he'd lose and deserved to and left N.O. While the NYTimes has me sitting at the counsel table (I'd agreed much earlier to be the Dealet Plaza expert) in fact I was never in the courtroom and never laid eyes on Shaw.

However, anything you learn about Oswald and his associates would interest me because at some time I still hope to return to that and a book about him.

MY copies of FBI files are much too extensive for you to read them all but if you do come here I have the (unknown) FBI Dallas index and by means of it you can locate all the records on those listed in it. Also, as I read this incredibly large collection of records, I made duplicate copies of some for subject filing. I have these in folders by name. With some subject breakdowns under Oswald and others. What I got before getting these FBI files is also filed by name and subject and can be retrieved without too much trouble. I am handicapped in file searching because of complications following successful surgery so I can't offer to do it for you because I can't keep up with my own needs.

If you haven't spoken to Sal Panzeca you might ask him if he ever looked into Oswald and what he found. I suspect they looked into Banister also.

If Jack Frazier is still around (he had the Quorum coffee club) he may have some copies of Oswald in New Orleans. He had a small paperback distribution business and he did make an effort to distribute the book when Louisiana News refused and tried to prevent any other distribution.

Good luck!